



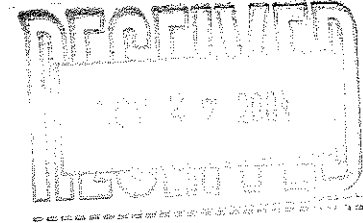
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OFFICE OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY

**NOV 22 2004**

Leigh M. Manasevit  
Brustein & Manasevit  
Attorneys at Law  
3105 South Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20007



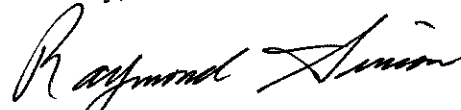
Dear Mr. Manasevit:

This is in response to your letter seeking clarification on the levels of rigor required for paraprofessional assessments under Title I as outlined in the updated non-regulatory guidance on Title I paraprofessionals issued March 1, 2004. You specifically asked if the elimination of the language, "the paraprofessional assessment is expected to evaluate candidates at a level equivalent to the second year of college," in this guidance is meant to signal a change in the law.

The answer to your question is no. The overall objective of both the guidance issued on November 15, 2002, and the updated non-regulatory guidance issued on March 1, 2004, is that the assessments of paraprofessionals be rigorous and objective as required by Section 1119 of the statute. The November 15, 2002 guidance provided States and local educational agencies (LEAs) with only one method of determining rigor and objectivity. The language was changed in the March 1, 2004 guidance to show that there is more than one way to make these determinations. The new language provides States and LEAs with much needed flexibility.

I hope this information clarifies the issue for you.

Sincerely,



Raymond Simon